

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

FALL RIVER

Report Date: 1982

Associated Regional Report: Southeast Massachusetts

Reconnaissance Survey Town Reports, produced for MHC's Statewide Reconnaissance Survey between 1979 and 1987, introduce the historical development of each of the Commonwealth's municipalities. Each report begins with an historic overview, a description of topography, and political boundaries. For the purposes of the survey, the historic period has been subdivided into seven periods: Contact (1500–1620), Plantation (1620–1675), Colonial (1675–1775), Federal (1775–1830), Early Industrial (1830–1870), Late Industrial (1870–1915), and Early Modern (1915–1940/55). Each report concludes with survey observations that evaluate the town's existing historic properties inventory and highlight significant historic buildings, settlement patterns, and present threats to these resources. A bibliography lists key secondary resources.

Town reports are designed for use together with a series of town maps that demarcate settlement patterns, transportation corridors and industrial sites for each historic period. These maps are in the form of color-coded, polyester overlays to the USGS topographic base map for each town on file and available for consultation at MHC. For further information on the organization and preparation of town reports, readers should contact MHC.

Users should keep in mind that these reports are now two decades or more old. The information they contain, including assessments of existing knowledge, planning recommendations, understanding of local development, and bibliographic references all date to the time they were written. In some cases, information on certain topics was not completed. No attempt has been made to update this information.

Electronic text was not available for digital capture, and as a result most of the reports have been scanned as PDF files. While all have been processed with optical character recognition, there will inevitably be some character recognition errors.

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MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORT

Date: January 1982

Community: Fall River

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Fall River, strikingly outlined against the sky on a long steep hill crest across Mount Hope Bay, looks both larger than it is and very foreign. The lofty chimneys of the great stone or brick mills and the soaring stone towers of numerous Roman Catholic churches, especially the twin pagoda-like towers of Notre Dame, give a European tone. In the foreground of the bay, the white Fall River Boat to New York, one of a line known to all New Englanders for ninety years, lies moored awaiting its evening sailing hour. [WPA Guide (1937), p.230]

The city of Fall River is situated on a granite ridge overlooking the Taunton River. The terrain is rolling with a north-south orientation. The city is almost totally divided by the North and South Watuppa Ponds. Principle drainage was via the Quequechan River. Soils are generally sandy to gravelly.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Fall River was incorporated as a town on February 26, 1803, from part of Freetown. In 1804 the town's name was changed to Troy and in 1834 it was changed back to Fall River. Fall River was incorporated as a city on April 12, 1854, and in the 1861 Massachusetts/Rhode Island Boundary resolution received those areas of the city known as Globe Village and Newville.

III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Fall River is an industrial community on the banks of the Taunton River in Bristol County. Prior to the 19th century Fall River maintained its agricultural focus. The principle settlement, Steep Brook, was basically a service area for the Post Road and surrounding agricultural area. With the development of textile technology the Quequechan River became a prime focus for development due to its water power potential. The late Federal Period was one of intense industrial development, financing for which came from the commercial/shipbuilding community of Somerset.

The availability of good water power and Fall River's role as a transfer point for passenger and freight traffic to New York made the city attractive to outside investors as well. By the beginning of the Civil War a population boom accompanied the growth of industrial investment. This development continued

unabated through the late industrial period. By the beginning of the early modern period the movement of textile concerns to the south had begun and by the late 1920s there was a widespread decline in industrial employment in the city. In 1928 the central business district was gutted by fire and in 1930 the city declared bankruptcy, all financial matters being handled by a State Board of Finance from 1931 to 1941.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500 - 1620)

A. Transportation Routes:

The extensive development in the western portion of Fall River (west of North and South Watuppa Ponds) has probably obliterated the majority of the native trail network in this area. One conjectured primary native trail extended along the present route of North Main and South Main Streets. Ultimately, this route probably extended into present Tiverton and Little Compton, Rhode Island, where it would have provided access to the environmentally rich Narragansett Bay. At least one north-south route appeared to skirt the eastern edge of North Watuppa Pond following Bell and Blossom Roads. A possible alternate route to the lower portion of the Watuppa Pond trail may have been oriented along a jeep trail and the Mowry Path. Several other native trails (probably secondary) snaked through the hilly terrain east of North Watuppa Pond, including a route branching off of the North Watuppa Pond trail to the east and south along the Woodchuck trail. The Taunton River would have provided the native population with a direct water route to Mt. Hope and Narragansett Bays while water travel between the present Fall River waterfront and North and South Watuppa Ponds was possible on the Quequechan River.

B. Settlement Patterns:

One reported Contact period burial (Longfellow's "Skeleton in Armor") was found in a gravel bank near the corner of Fifth and Hartwell Streets (Fenner 1911: 21). An unidentified native site was situated on the western edge of Cook Pond. A second unidentified native site was discovered on the eastern bank of the Taunton River below its confluence with the Assonet River. The Fall River area has a high potential for extensive native period settlement despite the town's hilly terrain. Native sites would have congregated along the eastern edge of the Taunton and the Quequechan Rivers and the shores of North and South Watuppa Ponds primarily because of their value as transportation routes and food sources. The rugged uplands east of North Watuppa Pond would have discouraged any significant native settlement in this area. Native settlement would have been heaviest in the Fall River area during the fall and winter months. Native migration to the mouth of the Taunton River and Mt. Hope and Narragansett Bays probably commenced in the late spring and persisted throughout the summer.

C. Subsistence Base:

Extensive sources of fish and wild game were available in the Taunton and Quequechan Rivers and North and South Watuppa Ponds. Hunting probably also took place in the interior woodlands and marshlands. Potential planting grounds were limited because of the hilly nature of much of Fall River. Native planting grounds were probably concentrated on the lowlands adjacent to the Taunton and Quequechan Rivers and the eastern shore of North Watuppa Pond and western shore of South Watuppa Pond. There is a high probability the native population engaged in European-Indian trade when considering Fall River's proximity to Narragansett Bay, a known region of pre-1620 European-Indian contact (e.g., Verrazano, 1524).

D. Observations:

The Fall River appears to have been part of a heavily settled riverine and coastal continuum which extended from Narragansett Bay east to Buzzard's Bay. The Watuppa Pond complex was probably one of the more heavily settled interior locations within the Southeastern Massachusetts study unit. The native population inhabiting present Fall River and Tiverton, Rhode Island, have been designated by several sources as the Pocassetts, a sub-group of the Pokanokets (Wampanoags). The latter group was centered in Mt. Hope, Rhode Island. The greatest probability of surviving archaeological evidence of native Contact Period settlement would be the lightly developed North Watuppa Pond area. Small pockets of period settlement remains may survive in the northernmost portion of the Taunton River waterfront.

V. FIRST SETTLEMENT PERIOD (1620 - 1675)

A. Transportation Routes:

The colonial overland transportation network was probably limited due to the virtual lack of English settlement.

B. Population:

There were no figures for the native population. If the Fall River area had a year round colonial population it amounted to no more than a handful of families.

C. Settlement Patterns:

The available sources provided no information concerning native settlement locations. The native population probably continued to congregate along the Taunton River and Watuppa Ponds because of the minimal colonial presence.

There is conflicting evidence as to the existence of a permanent pre-war colonial settlement. Some sources claim English settlement took place shortly after the consumation of the Freeman's Purchase in 1659. The Purchase encompassed present Freetown and Fall River as far south as the Quequechan River.

It appears more likely most if not all of the settlers occupying present Fall River did so only on a seasonal basis as hired overseers of the crop and grazing land owned by the original purchasers.

D. Economic Base:

The native economy was poorly documented. The Pocassetts probably retained their traditional subsistence patterns.

As mentioned above, the Fall River area was utilized by the original English owners as crop and grazing land.

E. Observations:

There is a serious need for reconstructing the native settlement existing in the Fall River area during this period. Additional research should be devoted to determining the extent, if any, of pre-war English settlement in Fall River.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675 - 1775)

A. Transportation Routes:

The available sources provide little data concerning the transportation network. North and South Main Streets were probably formally laid out shortly before the turn of the 18th century or early in the 18th century as a primary route between the Fall River settlement and that situated in present Freetown. Bedford Street (designated as "Old Bedford Road" on an 1812 map of Fall River) was likely constructed at a similar date in response to the settlement and industrial development along the Quequechan River. The Taunton River would have functioned as a regional water route facilitating contact with Narragansett Bay and interior Massachusetts (e.g., Taunton, Bridgewater) colonial settlements. The Quequechan River provided the settlers with a water route to the Watuppa Pond complex.

B. Population:

Population figures for both the native and colonial settlements are limited. In c. 1764, 59 natives resided in Old Freetown, most likely on the Indian Reservation established in the eastern portion of present Fall River (Dubuque 1907: 34). Old Freetown (included Fall River until 1803) had 1,492 residents in 1765. This figure increased 27% to 1,901 residents in 1776.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Native settlement continued throughout this period. In c. 1704, land was specifically set aside for the area's native population on Stafford Road. Several years later native settlement was reestablished on the newly created Indian Reservation

which encompassed land extending from North Watuppa Pond east to the "Proprietors Ways" (Dubuque 1907: 18). Native settlement concentrated along the eastern shore of North Watuppa Pond (Ibid).

The only English property probably destroyed in the Fall River area during King Philip's War was livestock and crops since colonial settlement appears to have post-dated 1676. The first settlement took place immediately after termination of the Anglo-Indian war. Matthew Bonner, Jr., reputedly erected a home at the junction of North Main and Brownell Streets. However, the community's focal point during the post-war period was further south along the Quequechan River, the site of several late 17th century and early 18th century industrial operations. Benjamin Church (King Philip's War hero) built a home in c. 1703 in this area. An early 18th century settlement node was probably established in the vicinity of the area's first church (Congregational) which was erected in c. 1714 on North Main Street near the present Fall River/Freetown line. Additional scattered homes were constructed adjacent to North and South Main Streets during the late 17th century and 18th century. The division of land adjacent to the Watuppa Pond complex in 1697 suggests there was some late 17th century and early 18th century settlement in this area. The land east of North Watuppa Pond was relegated to use as woodlots and meadowland probably because of the tract's hilly terrain, extensive marshland and distance from the Taunton and Quequechan Rivers.

D. Economic Base:

Limited documentation of the native economy. A c. 1763 map of the Old Freetown Indian Reservation property suggests a substantial portion of the surviving native population by this date had adopted a sedentary lifestyle in lieu of the traditional subsistence rounds.

Agriculture was established early as the base of the colonial economy. Industrial development was probably initiated prior to 1691 when Benjamin Church erected a sawmill on the Quequechan River. This river remained a focal point of the community's industry well into the 20th century. Church several years later built a fulling mill and a grist mill on the Quequechan. By the mid-18th century Thomas Borden operated a saw mill and a grist mill near the site of the Fall River Iron Works Company (Fenner 1911: 12). At approximately this same date, Joseph Borden ran a fulling mill near the Pocasset Factory while Steven Borden operated a grist mill and saw mill on the north side of the Quequechan River (Peck 1877: 199). John Read established a tannery in the early 18th century on "French's Hill" (probably immediately north of Bedford Street.) It is probable smallscale shipbuilding was begun on

on the Taunton River as early as the late 17th century or early 18th century when considering the importance the Fall River area's waterways played in the settlement's transportation network.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Almost all of the surviving Colonial houses in Fall River are located in the northern half of town, along North Main Street and at Steep Brook. Of some half dozen survivors, equal numbers of cottages and houses are known. These are, with one exception, center chimney structures of five bays' width.

Institutional: There were no ecclesiastical structures built in Fall River during the period. The only institutional structures were a group of schools built by the town of Freetown within the present boundaries of the city. These were a c. 1721 school at Steep Brook, two schoolhouses of 1727, one of which measured 18' x 14', and a 24' x 20' schoolhouse of 1748.

F. Observations:

The Fall River settlement was one of only a handful of communities in the Southeastern Massachusetts study unit which formally established a reservation for the native population during this period. The makeup and operation of the native community within the reservation should be clarified. Particular note should be made of the excellent probability of substantial archaeological evidence of the native settlement surviving on the former reservation land. The Fall River settlement possessed a surprisingly large number of mill operations when considering the area's modest number of potential mill streams. One of the heaviest concentrations of late 17th century and 18th century mill industries in this study unit was situated on the Quequechan River. The greatest likelihood of archaeological evidence of the settlement should occur on the northernmost portion of North Main Street.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775 - 1830)

A. Transportation Routes:

North and South Main Streets were a Post Road. Fall River and Watuppa Turnpike 1827 (Pleasant Street). General improvement of existing colonial roads and expansion of internal street grid during this period. Ferries across Taunton River to Somerset.

B. Population:

Population figures unavailable prior to incorporation in 1803. (Population at incorporation estimated between 700 and 1000.) While population remained relatively static between 1810 and

1820, between 1820 and 1830 there was a 160% increase. In 1825 there were 395 families in the entire town.

C. Settlement:

At the beginning of the period the bulk of residential settlement was at Steep Brook on the Post Road and at Slade's Ferry landing (site of first town hall), the remainder was widely dispersed farming and the Indian reservation on the east side of the Watuppa ponds. After incorporation the focus of residential/commercial/industrial settlement shifted to the Quequechan River. In 1812 settlement was linear along either side of the river at Bedford and Anawan Streets. By the end of the period there was intense industrial development along the banks of the Quequechan, residential and commercial development occurring north of the river in a primitive grid that extended along the river (Bedford/Pleasant Streets) and north on the eastern side of North Main Street. Remainder of the area east of North Watuppa Pond and near Steep Brook primarily agricultural during the period.

D. Economic Base:

Period witnessed the radical transformation of a limited agrarian economy to one of thriving manufacturing, including, by 1832, 14 cotton manufacturing companies. Wrote Thomas R. Smith (a major source for this report) in 1944:

The most significant geographic fact influencing Fall River's early industrial growth is this combination [of water power and coastal location, not the excellence of either]. As a port, Fall River was completely outclassed by many. As a textile center, it was still inferior to Lowell, Manchester, and Chicopee. But here, tributary to Long Island Sound, between Boston and New York, was the best natural privilege at tidewater anywhere south of New Hampshire. [Smith, p.38]

Nathaniel Hayward wrote in 1845: "The town of Fall River, in regard to the union of hydraulic and navigable waters, is probably without a parallel upon the whole American continent.

Even before the rise of textile manufactures, Fall River showed a marked orientation toward seaborne commerce. In the early Federal period, "every farmer of importance was a ship carpenter and had his own vessel, usually a sloop of 35-40 tons . . . in which he and his family made their trips to Providence, Newport, and even New York" (Fenner, p.12). By the first decade of the 19th century, 6-7 local mills processed material for the local population. Among these the waterfront mills of the Richard Bordens (uncle and nephew) provided the

basis for early growth, shipping products to Providence, Bristol and Warren.

Although a small cotton mill had been established at Globe Village in 1811, it was not until the nearly simultaneous founding of the Troy Cotton and Woolen Mfy. and the Fall River Mfy. in 1813 that cotton manufacturers in Fall River date its rise. For at least the first fifty years of their existence, the two mills rivaled each other for control of real estate and manufacturing interests. In the 1820s, soon after the introduction of the power loom, both companies expanded their holdings. Troy company interests built the Pocasset Mill (New Bedford merchant Samuel Rodman was a principal stockholder), renting out space to a number of cloth manufacturers including Andrew Robeson, whose Fall River Print Works became the first calico print works in the city. By 1832, 70% of the cotton cloth produced in Fall River mills was designated print cloth; of this amount, 12% was sold in New York and Philadelphia; 18% to a Providence firm; and the remainder consumed by Robeson's firm. The Pocasset also gave birth to Fall River's first separate textile machine building firm, Harris & Hawes (1823).

However, it was the Borden interests and the Fall River Mfy. which came to dominate much of Fall River manufacturing, primarily through the Fall River Iron Works (1821), the expansion of activity of a successful blacksmith operation by Richard Borden and Bradford Durfee. The increasing dependence of iron works on imported raw material placed this tidewater plant at a marked advantage over many other New England plants further inland. Its products included hoops for New Bedford whale oil casks, rolled iron for shipbuilding and general purposes, castings for machinery, and nails. In addition to local markets, the company's location at the head of Long Island Sound gave them ready access to New York City and the Hudson Valley (by 1831 the chief market for the company's nails). The Iron Works and the Fall River Mfy. effectively balanced the position of the Troy-Pocasset group, and rapidly expanded with other mills. In 1832 the largest mill in Fall River was the Iron Works-controlled Annawan Mill (1825), which supplied over half the print cloth of the Fall River Print Works. A year later Borden interests built their own plant, the American Print Works, which by the late 19th century, would be the largest in the country.

By the 1850s, with control of rail, steamboat, gasworks, and several textile mills, the Iron Works group would emerge as the dominant interest in Fall River. Wrote historian Smith:

The Iron Works was crucial to the development of Fall River. Without it, a smaller amount of local capital would have been available

for expansion; without it, control over local real estate less complete. The Iron Works strengthened and diversified the industrial structure and aided in the development of the machinery industry which became an important adjunct to the textile industry. [pp.38-39]

E. Architecture:

Residential: In 1803 in Fall River, there were 18 houses; by 1830, that number had increased to 30. Given the small number of houses dating from the period, it is remarkable that as many examples as are known have been preserved in the town. These include some dozen examples located in Steep Brook and along North Main Street. Among these are several center-chimney cottages and houses and at least one end-chimney, gable-roofed house on North Main Street. Of these, most have very simple detailing with entrance surrounds with pediments or straight entablatures; more elaborate entrance surrounds with pediments and semicircular fanlights with leaded muntins are unusual with only three or four examples observed. Other Federal period houses are located on Wilson Road in the northern section of town.

Institutional: The earliest institutional buildings in Fall River were constructed in the Federal period. The first of these was the First Baptist church, founded in 1781 as the second Baptist church of Freetown. A meetinghouse was not constructed for the congregation until 1828. The First Congregational society was founded in 1816, with a meetinghouse (45' x 36') constructed in 1823. The Society of Friends was also organized in Fall River in the Federal period (1812); their meetinghouse, built in 1821, was the first such building erected in the town. The first Town House was built at Steep Brook in 1805, with a new Town House built in 1825. This was located on North Main Street at Brightman Street.

VII. EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1830 - 1870)

A. Transportation Routes:

Improvement of existing Federal Period roads and expansion of internal street grid. Fall River Railroad 1845 to Myricks in Berkley, where it connected with the Taunton and New Bedford Railroads. Rail depot moved to connect with Bay State Steamboat Dock 1847. Fall River Railroad connected with Newport, Rhode Island, in 1863.

B. Population:

While there was a healthy increase in population between 1820 and 1840 (62%), the decades 1840-60 marked the beginning of a period of phenomenal growth; by 1870 the population had increased by 540% over the 1820 total. The foreign born

population was 38% of the total in 1855. St. John the Baptist (now St. Mary's) 1836. First French Canadian Church 1869. Small Black community on Maple Street between Linden and Grove during this period. Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church 1868.

C. Settlement:

Residential development was guided during this period by the location of the various cotton mills. High style residential districts which were located near the river at the beginning of the period were moved northward along Rock, Purchase and High Streets. There was an eastward movement of some of the textile mills creating a solid worker neighborhood in the vicinity of Bedford and Pleasant Streets. Some residential development at Globe Village during this period. Development of discrete ethnic neighborhoods begins during this period. (All textile oriented.) Area east of North Watuppa Pond remains relatively isolated and agricultural.

D. Economic Base:

By 1845 local entrepreneurs had developed a closely knit factory town, in which cotton manufacturing was supported by a cloth printing industry, an iron industry, and the beginning of the textile machine industry.

The greatest growth took place in the Iron Works group, between 1833, with the construction of the American Print Works and the 1850s when the firm emerged as the dominant interest in Fall River--a position due in part to the greater scope and variety of its operations, made possible by ownership of both waterfront property and waterpower (Smith). In 1840-44, the company erected a new steam-powered plant on the waterfront, followed in 1843 by the first steam cotton mill in Fall River, the Massasoit. The company, under Col. Richard Borden, was a major promoter of the Fall River Railroad (1846), as well as steamboat lines to New York and Providence.

By 1850, Quequechan water power had been virtually all developed. The recent improvements by Corliss in stationary steam engines would now make possible immense savings by cotton mills. Between 1855 and 1865 the number of cotton spindles doubled, as mills were built above the dam on the Quequechan.

Unlike the situation in other textile cities such as Lowell, the Civil War period did not prove a terrible hardship. Smith identified two reasons: (1) In anticipation of a short crop in 1861, Fall River mills had made large cotton purchases prior to the outbreak of the war, carrying most mills through

1861. (2) Most Fall River mills produced print cloth, whose sale price rose along with the skyrocketing price of raw cotton. Therefore the margin between the costs of raw material and finished product--upon which mill profits were based--remain the same. As a result, several companies were started and mills constructed during the war: the Union (1859, 1865), Granite (1863-65).

Despite the dominance of textile-related activities, other industries were also developed. For a time, merchants flirted with whaling; seven ships were reported in 1845 (New Bedford's fleet numbered 242 ships that year). Two large steam flour mills were built in 1852, one (the Massasoit) by the Iron Works group. The American Linen Company, also founded in 1852, became the first American attempt to manufacture linen on a large scale.

Major advances were also made in textile machinery. By 1855 three machine shops employed 150 men with an annual product value of \$200,000. In 1838 William C. Davol had introduced from England the self-acting spinning mule, later joining the textile machine building firm which became Marvel, Davol & Co. Jonathan Lincoln, a mechanic out of David Wilkinson's Pawtucket machine shop, came to Fall River in 1829, developing the "Fall River Loom" for the Watuppa Co., 1845-46. Lincoln, Kilburn & Co., which had initially specialized in the new Fourneyron turbine, became a major loom builder by the end of the period, with the construction of a new loom works in 1868. (The Fall River loom became such a fixture in local mills that it was standard equipment for the mills long after improved equipment had been adopted by other localities.)

E. Architecture:

Residential: A sizable increase in the number of houses built occurred in the period as the textile industry became established in the city. Densely settled neighborhoods grew up in the southern half of the city, adjacent to newly built granite textile mills. Construction activity increased steadily through the period, with the greatest number of structures built after 1850. Comparatively few Greek Revival cottages were built in Fall River although some of the earliest workers' housing observed is a group of double chimney, sidehall plan Greek Revival double cottages in the vicinity of Plymouth and Rodman Streets. The cottage was not widely adopted for workers' housing, however. The most common workers' housing forms are sidehall plan late Greek Revival and Italianate two-and-a-half story two-family houses and six-bay wide, center entrance, Italianate two-and-a-half story double houses, numbers of which were built across the city in the 1850s and through the 1860s. Sidehall plan Greek Revival and Italianate single-family houses are also fairly common. Most of the Early Industrial period's workers' and

modest-sized single-family housing is located in the western section of the city following the Taunton River along North Main Street and the Quequechan River along Rodman Street. There are relatively few stylish houses for the early years of the period, but the number of elaborate and stylish houses built increased during the period and many well detailed Italianate and High Victorian Italianate villas of the late 1850s and 1860s are preserved. Most of these are four-square plan, end chimney houses with low hip roofs with belvederes; a few houses were built of granite. More rare are Italianate villas with asymmetrical plans and towers. Although they are not numerous, there are a few important Greek Revival houses in Fall River, including at least one example (Carr-Osborn House, 1842) by Russell Warren. This is an end chimney, double pile plan structure with an octagonal cupola and monumental Corinthian portico; most other Greek Revival houses are similar with conservative end-chimney plans, although some do not incorporate a portico and others feature the small frieze windows common in coastal Bristol County. Only one temple-front Greek Revival house is known (Coughlin House, c. 1845); this is a two-story structure with a monumental Ionic portico and flanking one-story dependencies. Most of the elite houses of the period are located along the top of the ridge above North Main Street, following an axis along High Street.

Institutional: A great many churches were established in the period. These include the Central Congregational (1842), St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal (1851), Brayton Methodist Episcopal (1856), North Methodist Episcopal (1859), Church of the Ascension (Episcopal, 1836), North Christian (1842), Church of the New Jerusalem (Swedenborgian, 1854), United Presbyterian (1846), and Saint John the Baptist (Catholic, later Saint Mary's, 1836). The presence of Presbyterian and Swedenborgian churches as well as an early Episcopal parish and a very early Catholic parish are notable indications of Fall River's increasing diversity. Of the churches built in the period, only the North Christian (one-and-a-half story Greek Revival with pedimented facade and square belfry; 1854), First Unitarian (originally First Congregational; outstanding early Gothic Revival, two-story frame with projecting square entrance tower with pinnacles, paired lancet windows with labels; built 1835, remodelled and moved c. 1860; could be work of Solomon K. Eaton of Mattapoisett or of Isaiah Rogers), First Baptist (two-story, brick (sandblasted) Gothic Revival with projecting square entrance tower; Josiah Brown, 1850), and Saint Mary's (two-and-a-half story granite Victorian Gothic basilican plan with side aisles, offset square tower with spire; 1852-56, Patrick C. Keeley) churches have survived. The only other known surviving institutional buildings of the period are the Morgan Street

School (1868), a two-and-a-half story red brick Second Empire structure, and Engine Company #3, an 1843 Greek Revival fire station. An important institutional building which does not survive was the Town Hall of 1845-6, a two-and-a-half story brick Greek Revival structure, remodelled with a prominent tower and cupola in 1872 and demolished in the 20th century.

Commercial: The earliest commercial buildings of note were constructed in the Early Industrial period, primarily along Bedford Street in the vicinity of North Main and New Boston Streets. The earliest surviving structure is the Mount Hope block (c. 1845), a four-story brick Federal/Greek Revival building with a foreshortened fourth story; a few other multi-storied brick commercial blocks are also known to survive on South Main Street. The most outstanding commercial building to survive is the Fall River Savings Bank, a well-detailed two-story brick Romanesque Revival building built in 1867.

Industrial: Although many mills were constructed in the period, comparatively few survive: the earliest mills were often demolished to make way for technological improvements in manufacture and production. Among the period mills surviving are the Metacomet (1847), a six-story granite building with a low gable roof, the Union (1859, Josiah Brown), a five-story granite Romanesque Revival structure with a stair tower with round-arched openings, the Durfee Mills (1866) and the Davol Mills (1868).

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870 - 1915)

A. Transportation Routes:

Improvement of existing roads and continued expansion of internal street grid. Globe Street Railway in operation 1880, Fall River/New Bedford Railroad Watuppa line in operation 1875. Slades Ferry Bridge became railroad bridge in 1875. Dartmouth and Westport Street Railway and Fall River Street Railway opened in 1895. Lines opened to Newport 1898 and to Providence in 1901. Fall River/New Bedford Railroad ran on bridges over Quequechan River mill ponds.

B. Population:

Population growth continued unabated during this period with a 366% increase from 1870 to 1915. The bulk of this growth occurred between 1870 and 1900. Foreign born population increased to 49% of the total by 1885. While the foreign born totals increased by 79% in 1915, the proportion of this population of the city total dropped to 40%. In 1885 the foreign born population was largely composed of individuals from the United Kingdom (both Canadian French and the British Isles). By 1915 there was a large Portugese population. First Portugese Church 1891, small synagogue on South Main in 1891.

C. Settlement:

Extensive development in all sectors during this period. High style residential district extended northward along Highland Street. Extensive worker housing south of the river and East of Stafford Street. Other developments north at Oak Grove Cemetery and north of the river at Flint Village. Extensive residential development at Flint Village. Industrial development at Mechanicsville. Waterfront industrial development between Bay Street and the River. Well defined central business district with city hall at Market Square.

D. Economic Base:

The period saw the peak of new mill construction and represented the period of Fall River's greatest prosperity. At the same time, clear causes of the city's subsequent decline had appeared by the 1890s.

During 1871-72 the print cloth margin rose above the 200 cents level--a comforting return to the pre-war level, which it was not to reach again until the wartime boom of 1917. Money, Smith wrote, was easy and a speculative fever fueled mill investment. Between February 1871 and March 1872--the "era of new mills"--15 corporations were chartered and 20 new mills built. By 1875, 14,000 of the city's 16,000 wage earners were employed in the cotton mills. Production was dominated by print cloth production, 90% of the spindles in the city devoted to this product. The city's first fine goods mill, the King Phillip, was completed in 1873.

In the meantime, the American Printing Company, under the management of the Iron Works group, had expanded its own capacity and acquired the Bay State Print Works. The two plants together could process about 1/3 of the city's print cloth production. New York and Philadelphia were important outlets for excess print cloth production, readily accessible via the Fall River line, now a part of the Old Colony Railroad Company. The city's finishing capacity had been increased in 1872 by the organization of the Fall River Bleachery, to take advantage of the pure water of South Watuppa Pond.

The same decade also saw the introduction of the City Water Works (1872-75) and a municipal sewerage system (1874-77), after designs by Phineas Ball.

The perfection of high-speed ring spinning in the 1870s, though quickly accepted by southern mills, was only slowly adopted in Fall River mills, where mule spinning remained in use for filling into the 20th century. The use of ring spinners for warp yarns, however, allowed the introduction of a less skilled (and more polyglot) population than the strike-prone English mule spinners. But it was the Northrop loom, introduced by Hopedale's Draper Co. in 1895, which made possible the real advance of southern print cloth production

over that of Fall River, where mill owners, content to speculate in cotton prices and sale of cloth, were reluctant to invest in new equipment.

By 1910, Fall River mills had made some efforts to diversify into fine goods production (following New Bedford's lead), partially stimulated by increasing southern competition in coarse and medium fabrics. This diversification produced Fall River's last major period of mill construction, 1907-10, when eight new fine goods mills were built. Despite this diversification, however, print cloth margins continued to decline, and investment in new mills quickly came to a halt.

The most dynamic single influence in mill construction after 1890 was M.C.D. Borden, whose seven Iron Works Mills, constructed 1888-95, contained 500,000 spindles and 13,000 looms, producing standard print cloth.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Residential construction, which had been on the rise since the mid-century, increased dramatically in the Late Industrial period. By the end of the period, almost all of the buildings presently standing in Fall River had been built. Most dramatic was the increase in the number of multiple-family houses built, although single-family houses were also built in large numbers. The area of dense settlement expanded from the areas directly along the Taunton and Quequechan Rivers south to the Rhode Island border and east nearly to North Watuppa Pond. Among the earliest examples of multiple-family workers' housing constructed are a number of three-story Italianate tenements, most with gable roofs and center entrances; earlier forms of workers' housing commonly accommodated two families at the most, in either the double or the two-family house. While the first tenement blocks in Fall River date from the late 1860s, it is probable that most of the surviving examples were constructed between 1870 and 1890. Despite this innovation, double houses continued to be built into the early 1880s, with the traditional two-and-a-half-story Italianate double of the 1860s updated in the period with a mansard roof; the six-bay plan with a center entrance and two-story polygonal bays remained standard. Numbers of these tenements are located east of North Main Street and on lower Plymouth Street near Rodman Street. Smaller one-and-a-half story sidehall plan late Italianate and Queen Anne single-family houses are interspersed in these same neighborhoods. In the 1880s and 1890s, large areas of new construction began to develop. Blocks of hip roofed Queen Anne and late Italianate three-deckers interspersed with single and two-family houses were developed at Flint and Globe Villages. Suburban neighborhoods of more ambitiously detailed Second Empire and Stick Style single-family houses were built along High Street between Bedford Street and President Avenue. By the late 1880s and 1890s, construction of

well-detailed Queen Anne and Shingle Style single-family houses had extended north of President Avenue and east to Oak Grove Cemetery. In addition to single-family houses, large numbers of well-detailed Shingle Style and Colonial Revival two-family houses were built in the eastern half of town. Substantial Queen Anne and Colonial Revival houses were built in the established elite neighborhood along High Street, but by the turn of the century, the number of such elaborate houses being built had dropped considerably from the peak years of c. 1860-1880. A very few apartment blocks were constructed, mostly after the turn of the century, although one notable early apartment complex, French's Hill apartments (c. 1885) on North Main Street, a three-story frame building with a low hip roof, was recorded. Also notable for the period is the use of granite in residential construction; while houses of granite locally quarried had been built in the Early Industrial period, in the Late Industrial period, and particularly after 1890, granite came into wider use in a number of structures where it had not been used before, namely, in the construction of multiple-family houses.

Institutional: As the number of residential structures increased dramatically in the period, so too did the number of institutional buildings constructed. Fall River retains a large collection of late 19th-century churches and municipal buildings, in particular, an outstanding group of fire stations by the Boston firm of Hartwell and Swasey dating from the early 1870s. Other individually notable institutional buildings include the Bristol County Courthouse (1895-1910, Robert H. Black), a granite Richardsonian Romanesque Revival building, the Fall River Public Library (1898, Cram, Wentworth and Goodhue), a well detailed Renaissance Revival building, the Fall River Armory (1895, Wait and Cutter), a crenellated Romanesque Revival structure of massive proportions and the B.M.C. Durfee High School (1886, George M. Clough), a lavishly appointed Renaissance Revival building with a complex cross-gabled plan. The four Hartwell and Swazey fire stations are all brick and brownstone High Victorian Gothic buildings built in 1873. A great many churches were constructed in Fall River in the Late Industrial period. Among these are several outstanding buildings by noted architects; perhaps the finest of these are the Central Congregational Church (Hartwell and Swazey, 1875), a well detailed Ruskinian Gothic polychromatic brick and brownstone two-and-a-half story nave plan church with side aisles, an articulated crossing and projecting offset spire tower, and the First Congregational Church (Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, 1911-13), a very fine rock-faced granite ashlar Gothic Revival structure. The strong horizontal lines of the narrow ashlar masonry are juxtaposed against the attenuated verticals of the buttresses and projecting entrance tower to create a design of remarkable restraint and power. Other churches include the Victorian Gothic Church

of the Ascension (Covel and Baker, 1875), Saint Joseph's (1880) and Saint Patrick's (1881- 1889), both by Patrick C. Keeley, and several churches by a noted local designer of Catholic church related buildings, Louis G. Destremps (Notre Dame, 1894; Notre Dame de Lourdes, 1896). Particularly significant is the synagogue of the congregation Adas Israel (organized 1883), a brick Victorian Gothic structure built in 1889; it is probably the earliest and certainly one of the only synagogues standing in the study unit.

Commercial: Fall River's central business district developed in the period, with a number of three and four story brick commercial buildings built in the 1880s and 1890s along North Main Street from Bedford to Pine Street and after the turn of the century on South Main Street south of Bedford Street. Among the finest of these, architecturally, are the Borden Block (or Academy Building, Hartwell and Swazey, 1875-6), the Durfee Block (1887), the Fall River National Bank (c. 1890) and a flatiron plan building on Plymouth Street at Second Avenue (1905). Other three and four-story brick commercial buildings were constructed in the period at Flint Village on Pleasant Street.

Industrial: Granite mills of four, five and six stories' height continued to be built in some numbers through the turn of the century. Most of these feature prominent stair towers articulated in a variety of styles. Brick mills also began to be built in this period; the Border City Mill (1873, Josiah Brown) is a good example of brick mill construction in Fall River; five stories tall, it features a square tower with a bellcast roof. In addition to Josiah Brown, a prominent local designer of mills whose work extended into the period, other mill architects of the period include William T. Henry and Lafayette Nichols.

X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915 - 1940)

A. Transportation Routes:

Some expansion of internal street grid during early part of period. Routes 6 and 138 designated by 1930.

B. Population:

The early modern period marked Fall River's peak population as well as the beginning of its decline, fluctuations in population occurred during each five year census period. Foreign born population dropped to 28% of the total in 1930.

C. Settlement:

Continued residential and industrial expansion to the early 1920s, slackening by the late 20s as the textile

industry moved south. Fire of 1928 destroyed the Central Business District. Population decline precluded new residential construction.

D. Economic Base:

By the opening of the Early Modern period, the pressure of southern competition was beginning to be keenly felt. Southern goods, produced at a cheaper rate, had lowered print cloth margin to its lowest rate ever (60 cents in 1910). The outbreak of World War I, however, produced a tremendous surge in demand for cotton cloth, postponing the collapse. In 1917, the print cloth margin climbed to its highest rate of 350 cents.

But the extreme delirium of high profits and capacity output were cut short in 1920 by the collapse of print cloth prices. Between April and September, cloth prices fell from 17.5¢ per yard to 7¢. Sales and margins also fell. After 1922 the decline in cloth prices was uninterrupted. The 1924 decision of the Iron Works Mills to move part of their plant to Tennessee marked the beginning of a 15-year decline in which 73 mills and three fourths of the city capacity was liquidated. NRA relief, 1932-34, brought only a temporary respite from this decline.

Into many of the empty mills moved the garment industry, attracted from New York by the offer of cheap labor and often free factory space. By 1940 nearly a fifth of the city's work force were employed in garment shops.

E. Architecture:

Residential: Residential construction slowed in the Early Modern period but continued at a steady pace through the 1920s. Areas to the north of President Avenue extending north to Mount Pleasant Street and east to North Watuppa Road. Most of the residential structures built in that area are single-family Colonial Revival and Craftsman houses with some bungalows interspersed. Multiple-family houses (both two-family and three-decker) continued to be built in the neighborhoods to the south and east of the central business district. In most instances, these are simple Colonial Revival or Craftsman structures. Within these neighborhoods and at the edges of these neighborhoods, simple single-family cottages and bungalows were built in small numbers.

Institutional: The amount of institutional construction dropped off in the Early Modern period and the focus shifted from ecclesiastical construction to school construction. Among the public schools built in the period are the Doran School (1926), the Fall River Technical High School (1929), the Fall River School Administration Building (c. 1915) and a number of other schools across the town for which

construction dates are not known. Most of these are restrained Renaissance or Colonial Revival structures of masonry construction two-and-a-half stories in height with flat roofs. Other institutional buildings of the period include Y.M.C.A. (c. 1920), a yellow brick Renaissance Revival building and the U.S. Post Office and Custom House (1929), a two-story neoclassical structure.

Commercial: Commercial construction continued at a steady pace through the 1920s at the city center with three and four story masonry and steel constructed stores with Renaissance and Colonial Revival detailing built along North and South Main Street. Among the best of these are the Burke Block (c. 1928), a Renaissance Revival structure with elaborate terracotta trim, the Union Savings Bank (1928), the Moore Building (c. 1920), a yellow brick building with Chicago windows and pressed metal trim, and the Citizens Savings Bank (1928), a four-story Renaissance Revival building faced with ashlar limestone. In addition to these large commercial buildings at the central business district, a few smaller one-story commercial buildings are located along North Main Street, Plymouth Street, Pleasant Street and at neighborhood corner locations. These are comparatively few in number, with most commercial storefronts being frame buildings of the 1890s and turn of the century. What does survive well in Fall River are gas stations of the 1920s; at least two intact one-story, hip roof masonry drive-through gas stations with projecting shed roofs covering the pumps were observed. One of these stands at Pleasant and Quarry Streets in Flint Village and the other is located at the traffic circle at Plymouth and Pleasant Streets. Also observed in the city was an intact porcelain enamel, glass block and stainless steel storefront of the 1940s (?) in peach and seagreen with its original neon sign; this is for the Mark You Chinese restaurant on Pleasant Street in Flint Village.

Survey Observations: Fall River's survey is thorough in scope but contains very little historical documentation; particularly worrisome is the lack of identification of architects of major public and private structures. While many institutional buildings have subsequently been identified as to architect, almost no residential architects have been identified. Despite intensive urbanization in the southern part of town, 19th-century linear villages are well preserved on North Main Street at Steep Brook and along Wilson Road. As has recently been demonstrated by the destruction of the Borden Mill by fire, arson and decay pose a serious threat to underutilized and vacant textile mills.

XII. SOURCES

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